[illegible]

THE

ECSTASY.

AN

ODE.

By *JOHN HUGHES*, Esq; K

Me vero primum dulces ante Omnia Musæ
Accipiant, Cœlique Vias & Sidera monſtrent. Virg.

LONDON,
Printed: And Sold by J. Roberts in *Warwick Lane*.
MDCCXX.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may be proper to acquaint the Reader that the following Poem was begun on the Model of a Latin Ode of Casimire intitled E rebus humanis Excessus; from whence it is plain that Mr. Cowley likewise took the first Hint of his Ode call'd the ECSTASY. The former Part is therefore chiefly [illegible] Ode [illegible] [illegible] except the first three Lines. [illegible] Plan is left [illegible] [illegible] entirely Original [illegible] [illegible] Intention.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may be proper to acquaint the Reader that the following Poem was begun on the Model of a Latin Ode of Caſimire *intitled* E rebus humanis Exceſſus, *from which it is plain that* COWLEY *likewiſe took the firſt Hint of his Ode call'd the* ECSTASY. *The former Part therefore is chiefly an Imitation of that Ode, tho' with conſiderable Variations, and the Addition of the whole ſecond Stanza, except the firſt three Lines: But the Plan it ſelf ſeeming capable of a further Improvement, the latter Part, which attempts a ſhort View of the Heavens, according to the Modern Philoſophy, is entirely Original, and not founded on any Thing in the Latin Author.*

THE ECSTASY.

An ODE.

I.

I Leave Mortality's low Sphere.
Ye Winds and Clouds, come lift me high,
And on your Airy Pinions bear
Swift thro' the Regions of the Sky.
What lofty Mountains downward fly!
And lo, how wide a Space of Air
Extends new Proſpects to my Eye!
The gilded Fanes, reflecting Light,
And Royal Palaces, as bright,
(The rich Abodes
Of Heav'nly and of Earthly Gods)
Retire apace; whole Cities too
Decreaſe beneath my riſing View.
And now far off the rowling Globe appears;
It's ſcatter'd Nations I ſurvey,
And all the Maſs of Earth and Sea;
Oh Object well deſerving Tears!
Capricious State of Things below,
That changeful from their Birth no fix'd Duration know!

II.

Here new-built Towns, aſpiring high,
Aſcend, with lofty Turrets crown'd;
There others fall, and mouldring lie,
Obſcure, or only by their Ruins found.
Palmyra's far-extended Waſte I ſpy,
(Once *Tadmor*, ancient in Renown)
Her Marble Heaps, by the wild *Arab* ſhown,
Still load with uſeleſs Pomp the Ground.
But where is Lordly *Babylon*? where now
Lifts ſhe to Heav'n her Giant Brow?
Where does the Wealth of *Niniveh* abound?
Or where's the Pride of *Africk*'s Shore?
Is *Rome*'s great Rival then no more?
In *Rome* her ſelf behold th' Extreams of Fate,
Her Ancient Greatneſs ſunk, her Modern boaſted State!
See her luxurious Palaces ariſe
With broken Arches mix'd between!
And here what ſplendid Domes poſſeſs the Skies!
And there old Temples, open to the Day,
Their Walls o'ergrown with Moſs diſplay;
And Columns, awful in Decay,
Rear up their Roof-leſs Heads to form the various Scene.

III.

Around the Space of Earth I turn my Eye;
But where's the Region free from Woe?
Where ſhall the Muſe one little Spot deſcry
The Seat of Happineſs below?

Here Peace would all it's Joys diſpenſe,
The Vines and Olives unmoleſted grow,
But lo! a purple Peſtilence
Unpeoples Cities, ſweeps the Plains,
Whilſt vainly thro' deſerted Fields
Her unreap'd Harveſts *Ceres* yields,
And at the Noon of Day a Midnight Silence reigns.
There milder Heat the healthful Climate warms,
But Slaves to arbitrary Power,
And pleas'd each other to devour,
The mad Poſſeſſors ruſh to Arms.
I ſee, I ſee them from afar,
I view diſtinct the mingled War!
I ſee the charging Squadrons preſt
Hand to Hand, and Breaſt to Breaſt.
Deſtruction, like a Vulture, hovers nigh;
Lur'd with the Hope of human Blood,
She hangs upon the Wing, uncertain where to fly,
But licks her drowthy Jaws, and waits the promis'd Food.

IV.

Here cruel Diſcord takes a wider Scene
To exerciſe more unrelenting Rage;
Appointed Fleets their numerous Pow'rs engage,
With ſcarce a Space of Sea between.
Hark! what a brazen Burſt of Thunder
Rends the Elements aſunder!
Affrighted Ocean flys the Roar,
And drives the Billows to the diſtant Shore;
The diſtant Shore,
That ſuch a Storm ne'er felt before,

Tranſmits it to the Rocks around;
The Rocks and hollow Creeks prolong the rolling Sound.

V.

Still greater Horrors ſtrike my Eyes.
Behold convulſive Earthquakes there
A ſhatter'd Land in Pieces tear,
And ancient Cities ſink, and ſudden Mountains riſe!
Thro' opening Mines th' aſtoniſh'd Wretches go
Hurry'd to unknown Depths below.
The bury'd Ruin ſleeps; and nought remains
But Duſt above and deſart Plains,
Unleſs ſome Stone this ſad Inſcription wear,
Rais'd by ſome future Traveller,
The Prince, his People, and his Kingdom here
One common Tomb contains.

VI.

Again, behold where Seas, diſdaining Bound,
O'er the firm Land uſurping ride,
And bury ſpacious Towns beneath their ſweeping Tide.
Daſh'd with the ſudden Flood the vaulted Temples ſound.
Waves roll'd on Waves, Deep burying Deep lift high
A watry Monument, in which profound
The Courts and Cottages together lie.
Ev'n now the floating Wreck I ſpy,
And the wide Surface far around
With Spoils of plunder'd Countrys crown'd.
Such, *Belgia*, was the Ravage and Affright
When late thou ſaw'ſt thy antient Foe

Swell

Swell o'er thy Digues oppos'd in vain,
With deadly Rage, and riſing in its Might
Pour down ſwift Ruin on thy Plains below.
Thus Fire, and Air, and Earth, and Main
A never-ceaſing Fight maintain,
While Man on ev'ry Side is ſure to loſe;
And Fate has furniſh'd out the Stage of Life
With War, Misfortune, and with Strife;
'Till Death the Curtain drops, and ſhuts the Scene of Woes.

VII.

But why do I delay my Flight?
Or on ſuch gloomy Objects gaze?
I go to Realms ſerene with ever-living Light.
Haſte, Clouds and Whirlwinds, haſte a raptur'd Bard to raiſe,
Mount me ſublime along the ſhining Way
Where Planets, in pure Streams of *Æther* driv'n,
Swim thro' the blue Expanſe of Heav'n.
And lo! th' obſequious Clouds and Winds obey!
And lo! again the Nations downwards fly,
And wide-ſtretch'd Kingdoms periſh from my Eye.
Heav'n! what bright Viſions now ariſe!
What opening Worlds my raviſh'd Senſe ſurpriſe!
I paſs Cerulean Gulphs, and now behold
New ſolid Globes their Weight, ſelf-balanc'd, bear
Unprop'd amidſt the fluid Air,
And all around the Central Sun in circling Eddys roll'd.
Unequal in their Courſe, ſee they advance
And form the Planetary Dance!
Here the pale Moon; whom the ſame Laws ordain
T'obey the Earth and rule the Main;

Her Spots no more in ſhadowy Streaks appear;
But Lakes inſtead, and Groves of Trees
The wondring Muſe tranſported ſees,
And their tall Heads diſcover'd Mountains rear.
And now once more I downward caſt my Sight,
When lo! the Earth, a larger Moon, diſplays
Far off, amidſt the Heav'ns, her ſilver Face,
And to her Siſter Moon by Turns gives Light!
Her Seas are ſhadowy Spots, her Land a milky White.

VIII.

What Pow'r unknown my Courſe ſtill upwards guides,
Where *Mars* is ſeen his ruddy Rays to throw
Thro' heatleſs Skies that round him ſeem to glow?
And where remoter *Jove* o'er his four Moons preſides?
And now I urge my Way more bold,
Unpierc'd by *Saturn's* chilling Cold,
And paſs his Planetary Guards, and his bright Ring behold.
Here the Sun's Beams ſo faintly play
The mingled Shades almoſt extinguiſh Day.
His Rays reverted hence the Sire withdraws,
For here his wide Dominions end;
And other Suns, that rule by other Laws,
Hither their bordering Realms extend.

IX.

And now far off thro' the blue Vacant borne,
I reach at laſt the Milky Road,
Once thought to lead to *Jove's* ſupreme Abode,
Where Stars, profuſe in Heaps, Heav'ns glittering Heights adorn.

Loſt

Loſt in each other's neighb'ring Rays
They undiſtinguiſh'd ſhine in one promiſcuous Blaze,
So thick the lucid Gemms are ſtrown,
As if th' Almighty Builder here
Laid up his Stores for many a Sphere
In deſtin'd Worlds, as yet unknown.
Hither the nightly-wakeful Swain,
That guards his Folds upon the Plain,
Oft turns his gazing Eyes,
Yet marks no Stars, but o'er his Head
Beholds the ſtreamy Twilight ſpread,
Like diſtant Morning in the Skies;
And wonders from what Source its dawning Splendors riſe.

X.

But lo! — what's this I ſee appear?
It ſeems far off a pointed Flame;
From Earth-wards too the ſhining Meteor came.
How ſwift it climbs th' aërial Space!
And now it traverſes each Sphere,
And ſeems ſome living Gueſt, familiar to the Place.
'Tis He — as I approach more near
The great *Columbus* of the Skies I know!
'Tis NEWTON's Soul that daily travels here
In Search of Knowledge for Mankind below.
O ſtay, thou happy Spirit, ſtay,
And lead me on thro' all th' unbeaten Wilds of Day;
As when the Sybil did *Rome's* Father guide
Safe thro' the downward Roads of Night,
And in *Elyſium* bleſt his Sight
With Views till then to mortal Eyes deny'd.

Here

Here let me, thy Companion, [illegible]
From Orb to Orb, and now behold
Unnumber'd Suns, all Seas of molten Gold,
And trace each Comet's wand'ring Way,
And now deſcry Light's Fountain-Head,
And meaſure its deſcending Speed;
Or learn how Sun-born Colours riſe
In Rays diſtinct, and in the Skys
Blended in yellow Radiance flow,
Or ſtain the fleecy Cloud, or ſtreak the watry Bow;
Or now diffus'd their beauteous Tinctures ſhed
On ev'ry Planet's riſing Hills, and ev'ry verdant Mead.

XI.

Thus, rais'd ſublime on Contemplation's Wings,
Freſh Wonders I wou'd ſtill [illegible]
Still the great Maker's Pow'r adore,
Loſt in the Thought — nor ever more
Return to Earth and Earthly Things;
But here with native Freedom take my Flight,
An Inmate of the Heav'ns, adopted into Light.
So for a while the Royal Eagle's Brood
In his low Neſt obſcurely lies,
Amid the Darkneſs of the ſhelt'ring Wood;
Yet there with in-born Vigor hopes the Skies:
'Till fledg'd with Wings full-grown, and bold to riſe,
The Bird of Heav'n to Heav'n aſpires,
Soars 'midſt the Meteors and Celeſtial Fires,
With generous Pride his humbler Birth diſdains,
And bears the Thunder thro' th' Æthereal Plains.

F I N I S.